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C O N F I D E N T I A L KABUL 002987

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SUBJECT: NORWAY NONCOMMITTAL ON DEPLOYMENT WITH DUTCH,
COMMITTED TO FOLLOW THROUGH ON DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS IN THE
NORTH AND ON ENERGY PROJECTS

Classified By: CDA Chris Dell, reasons 1.4 B and D.

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: Norwegian MFA Political Director Kai Eide, in an August 30 office call on DCM, was noncommittal about how Norway would respond to a Dutch request that Norwegian troops be deployed alongside the Dutch in Uruzgan province. Eide indicated that the GON would remain engaged in the North even as some troops were withdrawn. Other topics discussed included the outlook for the September 23 meeting of the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board (JCMB) in New York, the Afghan National Police, counternarcotics and Norwegian energy projects. END SUMMARY.

¶2. (C) Dutch Troop Request: Noting press reports, Dell asked Eide whether the Dutch have approached Oslo to join the Dutch contingent in Uruzgan and thus help diffuse a growing domestic Dutch debate on whether to extend its commitment to keep troops in Afghanistan. Eide confirmed the Dutch had made the request, and he deplored press leaks on the issue that only complicate the GON's ability to think through the issue in a measured way. He noted that Norway does not have a presence in the South, that it has been considering consolidating its presence in the North, and that "continuity is important." The Norwegians are now familiar with their area in the North and they have ongoing projects (e.g., 82 schools) that need to be maintained. The Norwegian QRF in Mazar-i-Sharif will have to be rotated out at some point, and Norwegian Special Forces in Kabul are scheduled to depart on September 30. Eide said the Dutch request presented difficult political issues that the GON will have to consider carefully. The Foreign Minister went to Uruzgan to visit the Dutch contingent and to see how they operate.

¶3. (C) UNGA/Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board (JCMB): Eide inquired about U.S. views on what the September 23 meeting in NY with the SYG, Karzai and others attending in "the JCMB format" can accomplish. Dell anticipated that, given the UN's preferred format, the meeting will largely be symbolic, with no tour d'table and very likely a pre-agreed statement. U.S. would like the meeting to focus on counternarcotics and security, and to lay the foundation for a substantive JCMB in Kabul on economic integration. Eide said this would be acceptable to Norway if there is a balance

between security and development issues. In response to Eide's inquiry, Dell said the USG position regarding a new Special Envoy remained under discussion in Washington.

14. (C) Afghan National Police (ANP): Eide and Dell concurred that the ANP is currently ineffective and needs serious reorganization. Eide noted that Norway supports the EU Police Mission but it is a modest effort; the EU needs to move significantly beyond current projected numbers of trainers, to a number equal to that of the U.S. He added that the ANP should be trained as a paramilitary force. responding to Dell's questions, Eide said that Norway will be able to contribute 18-20 police trainers for all international police missions. It was his view that they should be concentrated on the highest priority (Afghanistan) for maximum effect (including with the EU), but political considerations may lead to their being parceled out among several different missions (Kosovo, Darfur). He suggested that serious efforts needs to be made at the UN and at NATO to get more trainers on the ground.

15. (C) Energy Sector: Eide said the GON Energy Ministry is formulating proposals to develop one oil field and two gas fields in Afghanistan.
DELL